



To: Senate Rules Committee
From: Sydney Scout, State Director, Oregon Working Families Party
Re: Senate Bill 224
Date: 11 February, 2019

Chair Burdick and members of the committee,

The Oregon Working Families Party supports the passage of Senate Bill 224 with a Motor Voter fix.

Under current law, every two years, minor parties like us are given two ways to maintain the right to nominate candidates. The first option is to have .5% of all registered voters be members of our party. This is a metric we have been proud to meet in the past. However, because Motor Voter automatically registers voters as Non-Affiliated (NAVs), it will unintentionally raise this bar by 50%. The second option to maintain our status is to run a statewide candidate of our own. At the Oregon Working Families Party, we want to be able to choose whether and when we run stand-alone statewide candidates based on our core policy mission and strategic considerations (such as avoiding running spoilers), not just as a means to maintain our status.

Senate Bill 224 includes a minor, yet crucial, fix to the Motor Voter law that would make maintaining our party status through registered voters within reach. More specifically, SB224 would make it so that we need only have .5% of all voters who are registered *with a party*.

We are thrilled that Motor Voter is expanding democracy in Oregon by registering millions of new voters. We hope that we can continue on this trajectory by ensuring that this policy does not have the unintended consequence of limiting the participation of minor parties. Above all, the Oregon Working Families party is committed to ensuring that democracy thrives in Oregon. We hope that you will share in our commitment and pass Senate Bill 224 with the Motor Voter fix intact.

Sincerely,

Sydney Scout
State Director
Oregon Working Families Party